The National Future Farmer

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April–May 1987

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The National Future Farmer
Published by the Future Farmers of America

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A Word With The Editor

Work is underway for the 60th anniversary convention of FFA, November 12-14, in Kansas City, Missouri. Early indications are that it will be a special one.

Two outstanding speakers have already been confirmed. One speaker is Lee Iacocca, board chairman of Chrysler Corporation, who is also well known for his work raising funds for the Statue of Liberty, a program in which FFA participated. The other speaker is Roger Staubach, best known perhaps as a quarterback for the Dallas Cowboys, and a Heisman Trophy winner while in college at Navy.

There is also a committee at work on the celebration. This committee was authorized by the Board of Directors in January and was appointed by Dr. Larry Case, national advisor. Committee members are Kevin Eblen, national FFA president; Coleman Harris, FFA executive secretary and Bill Harsh of Kansas City, a former executive of Hallmark Cards and a long-time supporter of FFA. This committee, along with several consultants, met once by conference call, and other meetings are scheduled between now and July when the committee will submit its report to the Board of Directors.

The 60th anniversary convention will kick off FFA's 60th year. It will be a time to look back, but emphasis will be placed on the future. While the voices of change are in the air, it is a good time for FFA to take stock of where it is and where it's going. This is being done by several groups, so FFA's 60th year may be its most important year.

Wilson Carnes

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The Cover: *Cover Photo by Andrew Markwart*
Tony Willis, Florida FFA state vice-president examines a column of hydroponically grown chili peppers in The Land pavilion at EPCOT Center in Florida. Explaining the conveyor system and growing process is Ginny Mann, agricultural student program coordinator for The Land.

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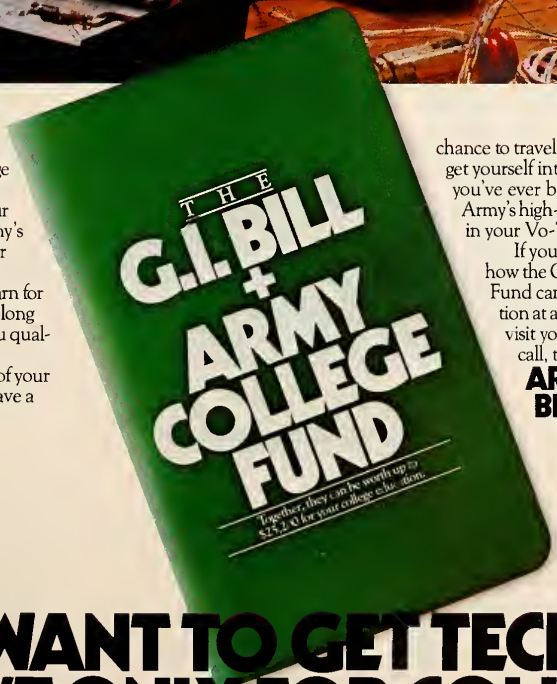

IF YOU WANT TO GET TECHNICAL IT ISN'T ONLY FOR COLLEGE.

The Mailbag

Think Safety!

After reading the article "Getting Aboard the ATVenture" in the last issue, I got to thinking about a member of our chapter that was seriously injured while riding on a three-wheeler last spring. I feel the article was very informative and that all persons owning an ATV or riding one, should attend classes on proper safety and operational procedures. All it takes is one time to play around and you could find yourself seriously injured or dead. It makes me think about my fellow FFA member and if he had worn a helmet, maybe he would be in class with me today.

Jeni Laird
Union Bridge, Missouri

Head Start

I really like the article "The Peppermint Twist" in the February-March issue. I think it is great that a high school senior has already got a start on his career.

Tammy Davis
Canoga Park, California

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High Tech Scores High

I am greatly pleased with your scientific coverage of a variety of areas of agriculture. I was especially interested in "Advice From Above" in the February-March issue. Keep up your in-depth scientific coverage of agriculture!

Jeff Wells
Canoga Park, California

Admiration for Delmar Bell

I am writing you regarding the beautiful story on the brave young man Delmar Bell (February-March, 1987) and the terrible accident he had. I really admire this brave young man and his family.

Tony Collette
Houston, Texas

Comments on Stress

I am writing in response to the article "I Cry A Lot" in the last issue. I found a lot of truth in this article. I can directly relate to a lot of the situations described. I don't necessarily agree with some of the aspects that were introduced for coping with stress, but I felt it was a good article.

Jim Tobben
Washington, Missouri

I really liked the article "I Cry A Lot" by Carolyn Dedolph in the last issue. Many people tend to forget some of the stress young people of today go through. The article gives some helpful and positive ways to cope with the stress of everyday life.

Stephanie Deeney
Canoga Park, California

What Have We Started?

After we noticed the "Muddy Water" item in the December-January issue, the chapter wanted to share our idea of fun. Last school year we had a "Dirt Day" when members used the farm tractor to plow a field and others brought in water hoses to add the finishing touch. We then had a game of mud football.

Missy Charboneau
Wichita Falls, Texas

Exchange Response

I read the item about the English exchange program in the February-March issue of *The National FUTURE FARMER*. I am very interested and would greatly appreciate an application and other information.

Steve Cobb
LaSalle, Colorado

Send letters or notes with name, address and chapter to: MAILBAG, The National FUTURE FARMER, P.O. Box 15160, Alexandria, VA 22309. All letters are subject to editing.

Board Of Directors Meet

The National FFA Board of Directors met at the FFA Center January 27-29 to review and implement new organizational policy. Here are some highlights of the Board's decisions.

- A one year "Agriscience in Space" pilot program was approved to be conducted in cooperation with the Young Astronauts Council to: a) assist with the infusion of agriscience technologies into ag education; b) change the perception and image of ag education by promoting its scientific and technical nature; and c) promote the agriscience career options and educational opportunities available in agriculture. The National FFA Foundation Board of Trustees approved the program and will see funding for it as a special project.
- The Board approved a change affecting subject material in the Prepared Public Speaking Contest. Starting in 1988, "Contestants may choose any current subject for their speeches which is of an agricultural character (nature), which may include agriscience and technology, agribusiness, agrimarketing, international agricultural relations and agricultural communications."
- The Board also approved change affecting subject material in the Extemporaneous Public Speaking Contest. The Board voted, "that the Extemporaneous contest have three themes identified and published in the National Contests Bulletin #4 (1988-89-90) as follows: a) agriscience and technology; b) agrimarketing; and c) international agricultural relations." This change would also begin in 1988.

International Scholarships Available

Thirty-one special scholarships are available for FFA members who want to participate in FFA's Work Experience Abroad international exchanges this year. Each of the scholarships are worth $1,000 and are available on a nationwide basis.

Eight of the 31 scholarships are allocated for the Japanese exchange which is a three-month program. Six scholarships are available for Hungary and 17 are available for programs in Kenya, Thailand, Poland and Italy collectively.

Anyone interested in a WEA scholarship should contact Melanie Burgess of the International Department at the National FFA Center (703) 360-3600, ext. 83, for an application and further information.

European Seminar for Advisors and Alumni Announced

The National FFA International Department recently announced a special 14-day European travel seminar for FFA advisors and FFA Alumni members.

The seminar will cover five European countries and give American seminar participants a first-hand view of agribusiness and production methods from other nations. The 1987 tour will begin in Washington, D.C., on June 30 and return to Washington on July 13.

The package costs $1,775 per person. The fee includes most meals, all lodging and air transportation to Europe. The fee also includes interpreters and tour guides, city sightseeing, entrance fees and all tips throughout the tour.

Sign-up for the seminar has already begun. Availability is limited to vo-ag instructors, advisors, FFA Alumni members and spouses. Those interested in participating should contact the FFA International Department soon, because passports and other documents must be obtained prior to departure in June.

New Reporter's Handbook Coming

The FFA Reporter's Handbook, a guide for chapters working with the print and broadcast media, is being overhauled this summer and a new edition will be available in September.

The new version of the handbook will include new ideas and information for working with the press. It will also emphasize new information technologies such as electronic mail. The new reporter's handbook is being sponsored by The Stuart Foundation as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

Computers in Ag Applications Due June 25

The 1987 National FFA Computers in Agriculture Seminar is scheduled for the week of August 8-12, in Washington, D.C. All state Computers in Agriculture award winners will be recognized and five national winners will be chosen. Each state winner will have all seminar expenses paid for, in addition to a travel allowance. But you don't have to be a state winner to participate. All FFA members and advisors are welcome to attend this year's seminar.

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Illinois Takes Lead In Value-Added Products

The Illinois Legislature has allocated $500,000 for the Center for Value-Added Agriculture to convert raw agricultural commodities into finished products.

These products could mean higher Illinois agricultural employment, more industry, an expansion in the tax base, improved exports and the development of other agricultural products, according to John Campbell, dean of the college of agriculture at the University of Illinois-Urbana.

The value-added research could make the difference between producing surplus agricultural commodities for already-saturated world markets and providing highly marketable specialty products tailored to a specific consumer demand, said Campbell. For example, a one-pound box of corn flakes costs about the same as a 56-pound bushel of unprocessed kernels.

Small-Scale Farming Office Established

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has established an Office for Small-Scale Agriculture. The new office will work with other USDA agencies to focus department expertise and resources on issues concerning small-scale farming, and will coordinate its functions with other rural development activities within USDA.

"Changing trends in recent years have caused small-scale agriculture to become a viable economic enterprise," said Howard (Bud) Kerr, program director. "Small farms have increased in number and importance partly as a result of consumers' increased preference for fresh, locally-grown farm produce.

Kerr said the office will assess and disseminate information on research, education and technological developments of interest to small and medium-sized farm operators.

Strawberry Clones Frozen in Time

Consumers in the 21st century could be eating today's superior, virus-free strawberries even if disease, drought, or other disasters wipe out future strawberry crop plants, according to a USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS) scientist.

A 100-year experiment to preserve plant tissue will show whether gene-carrying shoot tips of strawberry plants can be frozen in liquid nitrogen and safely thawed to clone new plants. Ultracold freezing, called cryopreservation, has a problem: how to freeze and thaw frozen plant tissues properly without destroying them. Through experimentation, ARS scientists have achieved a 90-percent success rate in freezing strawberry tissues, thawing them, and then growing them into full-size plants.

Harry B. Lagerstedt, an ARS horticulturist in Corvallis, Oregon, says scientists will monitor the experiment over the next 100 years. The strawberry shoot tips will be removed from the liquid nitrogen after 5, 10, 25, 50, 75 and 100 years, grown into whole plants, and checked for possible changes resulting from gene defects.

Market First, Produce Second

A shift from a production to a marketing mentality is in order if American agriculture is going to survive and compete in the world marketplace, says an ag industry executive.

"To deal with the change in American agriculture we must become more savvy in understanding our customers, whoever those customers may be," said Dale A. Miller, president and CEO of Sandoz Crop Protection Corporation. "This salesmanship means we must pursue more aggressive R&D (research and development) programs to meet our customers' specific market niches for our products."

The tight economic situation, a withdrawal of government support and technological innovation have all contributed to changes in agriculture, Miller noted, pointing out that an environmentally-concerned farm population, developments in biology and tight budgets were all factors in the need for and development of high unit-activity, environmentally-safe pesticides that are presently coming on the market.

USDA's "Agtrade" Online

A computerized service offering information about international agricultural trade is now available from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The new data base, named "Agtrade," offers speeches, policy statements, feature stories, world agricultural production and trade data, supply and demand estimates, and data on national productivity and debt.

Agtrade can be accessed by personal computers and communicating word processors fitted with modems. The information is available to subscribers anywhere in the world virtually moments after release.

Agtrade is available through a computerized information service called "USDA Online," which offers USDA press releases, crop and livestock reports and other agricultural data. To access USDA Online, users must obtain an account with USDA's contractor. An organization may opt to receive only that part of the service it wants.

Farm Chemical Safety Is In Your Hands

The National Agricultural Chemicals Association (NACA) has announced a national "Farm Chemical Safety Is In Your Hands" program to improve the efficiency and professionalism of people on the front line of handling farm chemicals.

"We hope to develop understanding of the principle that risk equals toxicity

multiplied by exposure," said Dr. Earl C. Spurrier, NACA's vice president of Regulatory Affairs. "By simply reducing exposure, you reduce risk. All it involves is the use of rubber gloves, water, thorough washing and following label instructions for all protective measures."

The program includes distribution of a 12-minute videotape, a 12-page training booklet and educational packets containing "Rubber Glove Zone" decals. The educational packets are free from NACA.

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Photo by Author

FFA member Troy Willis (left) lifts a plastic foam board supporting bibb lettuce out of a nutrient-rich pond. The Land's student coordinator Ginny Mann (center) and FFA member Bonnie Owens examine the root systems that grow without soil.

It was almost 25 years ago that Walt Disney went on television and talked about his dream for an EPCOT Center. EPCOT would be a place where families could go to see people and architecture from other continents collected in one community. Disney also envisioned a Futureworld that would stimulate creative thinking.

At the center of that dream was a community that would be agriculturally self-sufficient, applying the latest state-of-the-art techniques to food and fiber production and environmental beautification.

With a few alterations, that dream is reality today at The Land pavilion at EPCOT Center, which opened in 1982 at Florida's Walt Disney World.

The Land

Although it doesn't provide all of the food and fiber for EPCOT, The Land does showcase some of the latest production techniques in agriculture. It also provides visitors—8 to 10 million every year—a historical and environmental view of agriculture using classic Disney entertainment technology.

The Land, sponsored by Kraft, is a six-acre complex under one roof that houses restaurants, theaters and the main attraction, the "Listen to the Land" boat ride. Visitors travel through a simulated rain forest, a desert, a prairie and a farm. Then they see large-screen film clips of agricultural production as it is today, including a regiment of John Deere combines harvesting wheat.

The boat, which can carry 2,300 guests per hour, passes through this theatrical part of the trip into five growing areas that include the Aquacell, the Tropic Area, the Desert Area, a Desert Greenhouse and the Creative Area. According to FFA members who have taken the ride, this is the good stuff.

So Much to See

The Tropic area features important tropical food crops, like eggplant, banana, pineapple, coconut and rice. The show also displays lesser known crops with great potential because of their food value and tropical adaptability, such as winged beans and peach palm.

In this greenhouse, grasses such as corn and sugar cane are seen intercropped with legumes like beans and pigeon pea. In one example, corn supports the climbing beans, which increases the pod production surface. The beans fix aerial nitrogen to enrich the soil—and benefit the corn.

The Aquacell is an environment for raising fish and aquatic animals in high density for food production. The Land's Aquacell is unique because the water is recirculated through a filtration system for water conservation. Species such as the Blue Tilapia, American Eel and Channel Catfish are grown here and many are eventually served in The Land's restaurants.

In the Desert Area, drought-tolerant crops and trickle irrigation show how to make marginal areas bloom. Trickle, or drip, irrigation places the correct amount of water at the plant's root zone.

The adjacent Desert Greenhouse contrasts the open-field growing with controlled-environment agriculture. Here, tomatoes climb on space-saving trellises and computer sensors monitor temperature, humidity and sunlight. Halophytes,

Listen to the Land

The Land pavilion at Disney's EPCOT Center tells agriculture's story using entertainment and high-tech production techniques.

By Andrew Markwart

plants that can be irrigated with pure seawater, are featured here.

In the Creative Area, visitors see tomatoes, peppers, strawberries and other crops growing on conveyor belts—either hanging individually or inside hollow column posts. While the plants move around on the belts, they enter "feeding areas" where their roots are sprayed with a nutrient solution. Excess solution drips into ponds for water hyacinths, grown as biomass for methane production.

There is also a display of plants growing in lunar (moon) soils which is currently being researched by The Land's staff in cooperation with NASA.

Original ideas for the hydroponic growing systems at The Land were developed and designed by the Environmental Research Laboratory (ERL) at the University of Arizona in Tucson.

Since agriculture keeps evolving, so does The Land. After October of this year, a biotechnology portion will be added to the show near the end of the boat ride. It is being created through the cooperation of the USDA's Agricultural Research Stations.

Student Involvement

The Land offers a six-month internship program for college students with agriculture majors. Most of the students chosen are from land-grant universities. They are paid to grow plants used in the show and give guided 45-minute walking tours to the seriously curious visitors.

The students must also be involved in a research project with one of the permanent staff members. A short course is taught to complement their work experience. The class gives them detailed exposure to lunar soils testing, pest management research and other activities.

Making People Think

Dr. Henry Robitaille, agricultural manager of The Land, said the show displays should not be interpreted as the

(Continued on page 32)

Computer specialists monitor light, humidity and temperature (above top) using sensors placed throughout The Land's "Creative" growing area. The Land pavilion (above) covers six acres and hosts 8 to 10 million guests every year.

Photos by Walt Disney Productions

How the Manager of The Land Sees the Future of Farming

In his position as agricultural manager of The Land, Dr. Henry Robitaille constantly monitors the latest agricultural research being done at land-grant universities, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's research stations and NASA's plant science labs. With that perspective, he says agriculture students probably have a better understanding of how science works in the real world than a lot of people.

"When you're in high school, you take biology, chemistry and physical science and it's kind of boring. You don't know what you're taking it for," said Robitaille. "Agriculture is neat because you're applying something from all the different sciences."

He says future farmers will have to put that knowledge to work to be viable businessmen. "The farmers who are really going to be successful, the producers of the future, are going to be the ones that are applying absolutely everything they can to production—computer sciences, the latest crop plants, improved seeds and cultivars (plant varieties) and farm machinery. They'll be the first ones to apply robotics to agriculture."

According to Robitaille, some of the technology is at work today. "I was out in Arizona recently and visited with a couple of guys who graduated from the University of Arizona. They've bought some farmland and are growing cotton and making a lot of money. They're applying drip irrigation, computer control systems, and are successfully experimenting with applying their herbicides through the drip irrigation system. They're very curious, very technology and science oriented, and they're making a go of it.

"I have no doubt these kind of people will continue to be successful in farming and make money in the future, regardless of what happens to the overall economy, because they're competing on an international basis. These kinds of American farmers can outcompete any farmers in the world.

"With all the new science and technology, even the farmer that stops with a high school education is going to have to learn and apply this stuff or they're going to be left behind." •••

A Good Case for Japan

National FFA advisor Larry Case shares his experiences of traveling with the national officers to Japan.

Photo by Larry Case

National FFA President Kevin Eblen exchanges flags with a Future Farmers of Japan member during a welcoming ceremony in Tokyo.

IN the first two weeks of February, FFA's six national officers toured Japan where they found a country bulging with 115 million gracious, industrious, intelligent people.

The officers—Kevin Eblen, Kevin Yost, Dean Harder, Jayme Feary, Jones Loflin and Daren Coppock, were accompanied by Larry Case, national FFA advisor and Lennie Gamage, manager of international programs.

For Gamage, a seasoned international traveler, the trip was another return visit with longtime friends at Mitsui Co., Ltd., the tour sponsor. But for the officers and Advisor Case, it was their first trip to the Orient, and for most, the first trip to any foreign country.

Say What?

As soon as the officers stepped off of the jet in Tokyo, it was clear they were in for a challenging two weeks; communicating in Japanese wasn't going to be easy. As they visited the Future Farmers of Japan, farms, factories, markets and host families, the biggest obstacle between the officers and their hosts was the language barrier.

Although an interpreter accompanied the group throughout the trip, "the officers were put in situations where they spoke no Japanese and their hosts spoke no English, yet they still communicated well," said Case. "They had to sit around with their dictionaries and experience the frustration of looking up words. Once they communicated, the whole room was happy! That's an experience you can't get any other way. They were definitely outside their comfort zone."

So how can the frustration of groping for words be beneficial to the officers? "They learned a lot about interpersonal communication—using gestures and expressions without words—which is going to be a big plus for them in their year as national officers," said Case.

The FFA delegation toured Japanese farms and, according to Case, found some differences and similarities to American agriculture. One of the major differences was the powerful influence Japanese farmers have in the government.

"Their congressional regions are split up by geographic area, not by population, like the United States. As the population has migrated to the cities, the farmer has increased in political clout," explained Case. The farmers are organized into cooperatives and the leaders of these co-ops have influence throughout the political system.

The Trade Issue

Besides communication and agricultural politics, the officers also got a lesson in Japanese-American trade from the Japanese point of view.

They toured shipyards where freighters were unloading U.S. grains and processing plants for corn gluten, soybeans and cattle feed.

The issue of poor quality American grain kept surfacing during the visits. "As we traveled to the subsidiary companies of Mitsui," said Case, "they kept telling us, 'Your corn has too much moisture in it—it's hot when it gets here onboard ship, and it has too much broken corn and foreign material in it.' Everyone of them said we had to get the quality of our product up."

Countries such as China, South Africa and Brazil are exporting more grains to Japan, crowding a market that the U.S. once dominated. It has become a world shopping market according to Case, and the U.S. is losing ground.

He sees two main reasons for the grain quality problem; harvesting methods and the misuse of technology. "America picks their corn wet and drys it in dryers. When you dry it, you cook it a little bit and cause it to crack more. Also, the harvesting process is through a combine, not corn pickers, which beats the grain up more," said Case.

Although some of the problem is at the producer level, Case said that grain merchants shipping the corn are also to blame. He said their computer mixing technology at the port level is so sophisticated that they can mix clean grain with damaged grain up to—but just under—contract specifications.

The national officers toured Mitsui's international communication center at the main headquarters in Tokyo.

"We can't afford the attitude of 'Here's our corn, we have lots of it and you ought to buy it,'" explains Case. "What we have to do in an international marketplace is to define what the market wants, and then design a product *for that market*. If the Japanese want clean, whole kernel, dry corn, then we need to deliver that product at a competitive price."

Besides a strong lesson on international trade, Case said the national officers "grew in their knowledge of international agriculture and an appreciation for the Japanese people and their culture. Even in the short time they shared with their host families (two days with no interpreter) there were some tears shed whenever they had to part. It was an emotional experience as well as a learning experience." •••

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NFF

The New Ag Professionals: Commodity Lobbyist

Keith Heard works with congressmen, senators and the Reagan administration to make sure the cotton industry gets a fair shake.

By Andrew Markwart

Photo by Author

Keith Heard's career path has taken him from a small farm in Mississippi, through college, two political campaigns and a staff position with a senator. Now he's a lobbyist with the Cotton Council.

"I COME from a place so small, it didn't even have an FFA," laughs Keith Heard. "I lived seven miles from a town of 700 people—Brooksville, Mississippi." Sitting in his seventh-floor office that overlooks 15th Street in downtown Washington, D.C., Keith Heard appears to be doing quite well for such humble beginnings.

Heard is a government relations representative for the National Cotton Council; he's a lobbyist. His job is to make sure the cotton industry is represented whenever the federal government does something that might affect cotton. "We represent the whole cotton industry, from producer through the textile manufacturer," said Heard. "We speak for the industry when we walk into a room."

Last year, he worked with congressmen and senators to make sure parts of the Farm Bill would be fair for cotton growers. Now he's working with those legislators to maintain funds for agricultural research. He's also there when the Regean administration is putting their budget together to advise what impact a certain budget cut may have on the industry.

The Cotton Council is one of many trade associations that represent groups of people with special interests. Just in the agriculture sector, there are the National Corn Growers Association, the National Cattlemen's Association, the U.S. Feed Grains Council and many more representing just about every commodity.

Much of the public is skeptical of lobbyists and the role they play in influencing government decision-making. Many think that legislators only pay attention to the rich and that the common man is left to fend for himself. What does Heard think about the public's perception of lobbyists? "It's unfortunate. I picked up my local newspaper last week, and in an article, my old civics teacher was lashing out at lobbyists and how horrible they are for the system. I'm going to go see her when I'm home and say 'I'm sorry, but associations have gone back to the basics of democracy—representation and communication with legislators.' Granted, there's people doing things that shouldn't be done, but that doesn't mean that the institution itself isn't proper."

Taking the point a step further, Heard says the skills necessary to be a good lobbyist are sincerity, a willingness to listen, fairness and flexibility. He adds, "Be humble—there's a lot of lobbyists in town that think they know more than anybody—but the most important thing is to be honest in whatever you do. You can't fall away from the basic principles you stand for."

Heard grew up on a farm which evolved through dairy, soybeans, feed grains and beef, depending on what was most profitable at the time. He majored in history at Mississippi State University with ideas of going into agribusiness after school. So why major in history and not agribusiness, economics or finance? "I wanted to broaden myself and get a liberal arts degree," said Heard. "I feel it's important for agriculturalists to spend more time in those fields in case, for some reason, you have to leave the farm."

"I've combined two of my favorite subjects, agriculture and politics."

He graduated in 1978, and went home to farm soybeans. Near the end of the summer, recalls Heard, "My father was going to put me on a bulldozer until harvesttime, so I interviewed for a job in the senate campaign with then Congressman Thad Cochran."

Heard got the job and travelled with the congressman during the campaign. When Cochran won, he asked Heard to go to Washington and be his special assistant in agricultural legislation. Heard was also an office troubleshooter. For example, "When the fuel crisis hit in '79, I moved into that area and kept diesel fuel moving during planting season to all the farmers in Mississippi," said Heard.

It was 1985 when Heard took his current position with the Cotton Council. "I've been here two years, and I'm in a learning process that's still going on," he said. "My father and I always talked politics and issues ever since I was a little boy and now, with the Cotton Council, I've combined two of my favorite subjects, agriculture and politics.

"Because we represent the whole industry, it's given me a business background as well, and what other business can take you internationally as quickly, or have such an impact on this country's economy? It's phenomenal."

Although Heard enjoys his work, he says it does have certain drawbacks. Besides the image problem, he says "the hours are long and the nights are late. What people don't realize is that we're in perpetual planting season around here. The pressure is always on." •••

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Turlock FFA—Mechanics and Much More

By Steve Olson

PEOPLE still joke about it, instructor Dale Pollard says, "Oh, your school is in California—do you go surfing during lunch hour?"

To the contrary, notes Pollard, head of the vocational ag program at Turlock High School. Turlock is definitely not beach country. Located in the central San Joaquin Valley, about 100 miles inland from the Pacific Ocean, Turlock offers some of the richest farming in California, the U.S. and the world.

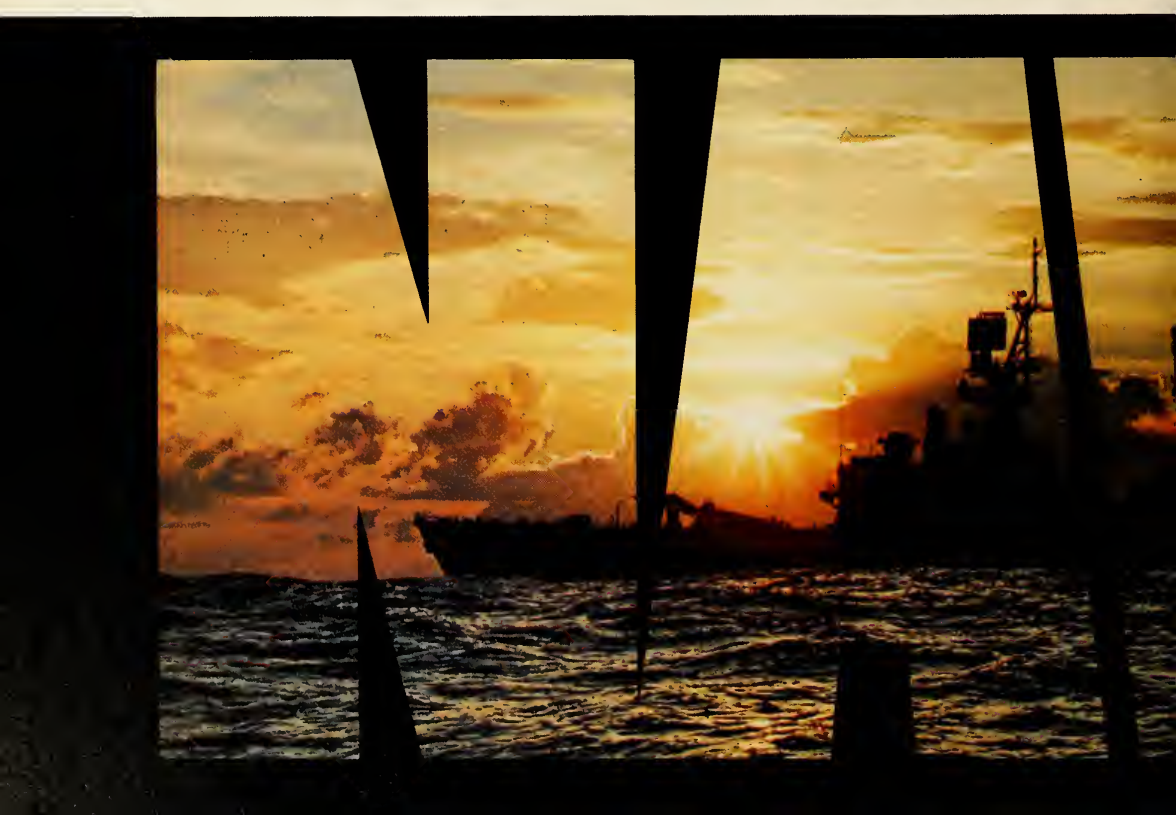
Turlock is a growing community of about 35,000, surrounded by almond orchards, dairy farms and grain fields. The leading commodities produced in the area are milk and cheese products from the dairy industry, broiler and processed chickens, almonds, eggs, cattle and calves, peaches, walnuts, tomatoes, turkeys and silage. According to Pollard, the strength and diversity of the area's agriculture is well-reflected by the balance of the school's vocational ag program.

Ag mechanics students, led by teacher Dave Moser, produce some of the most visible products, which are immediately absorbed into area agriculture. This year, for example, four students are constructing silage dump boxes from scratch. Another is building a truck-mounted, power manure spreader, and another, a land plane. In addition to the major constructions, these and other students have fashioned dozens of other medium and small projects such as calf pens, dairy gates and gun safes.

Less visible on campus, but equally important to the students, are the dairy cattle, swine, sheep, beef cattle and horticulture projects they maintain on their own or on neighbors' farms.

And this chapter is not only strong in

Photo by Author



projects. From FFA competition, Turlock students have walls lined with trophies and awards. For example, Turlock High dairy judging teams went to the FFA nationals in 1981 and 1985, claiming first and third place, respectively, in those years. Just last year the chapter produced three state champions in ag sales and service, dairy production and swine production. Of the three, Max Olvera and Tim Johnson went on to win gold awards in the nationals and Leroy Rocha went on to earn the American Farmer degree.

But while winning and placing is nice, what pays off in the long run is the hard work and preparation that earned those trophies, comments teacher Anthony Silva. He stresses that the vocational ag staff also emphasizes leadership training in areas such as public speaking and parliamentary procedure. It is these skills, combined with project work in production, that will enable FFA students to have a broad impact on the ag industry when they graduate from high school and college.

"You can't just be a good producer, you've got to be able to go out and do things. To be involved in the industry is to be able to protect the industry," Silva says. What does that mean? It means serving on the board of directors of the area cooperative or on the advisory council of a bargaining association. It means lending support to educating and marketing programs. And it could mean lobbying in your state capital or even in Washington, D.C.

"Leadership means not only being a good producer, but a good business person," he said. In fact, ag business is a key area for students to get involved in these days. In the future, Silva says, "Out of 100 in agriculture, two will be producers, and 98 are going to serve those producers." Those who serve will be equipment salespersons, pest conrol advisors, loan agents and in dozens of other ag-related occupations.

Like most of his students, Silva feels that the Turlock area provides just about all the agricultural opportunity anyone could ask for.

"I don't think there's a kid here who would be afraid to try anything," he said. "There's no place I'd rather be". •••

Brother, Partner, Mechanic

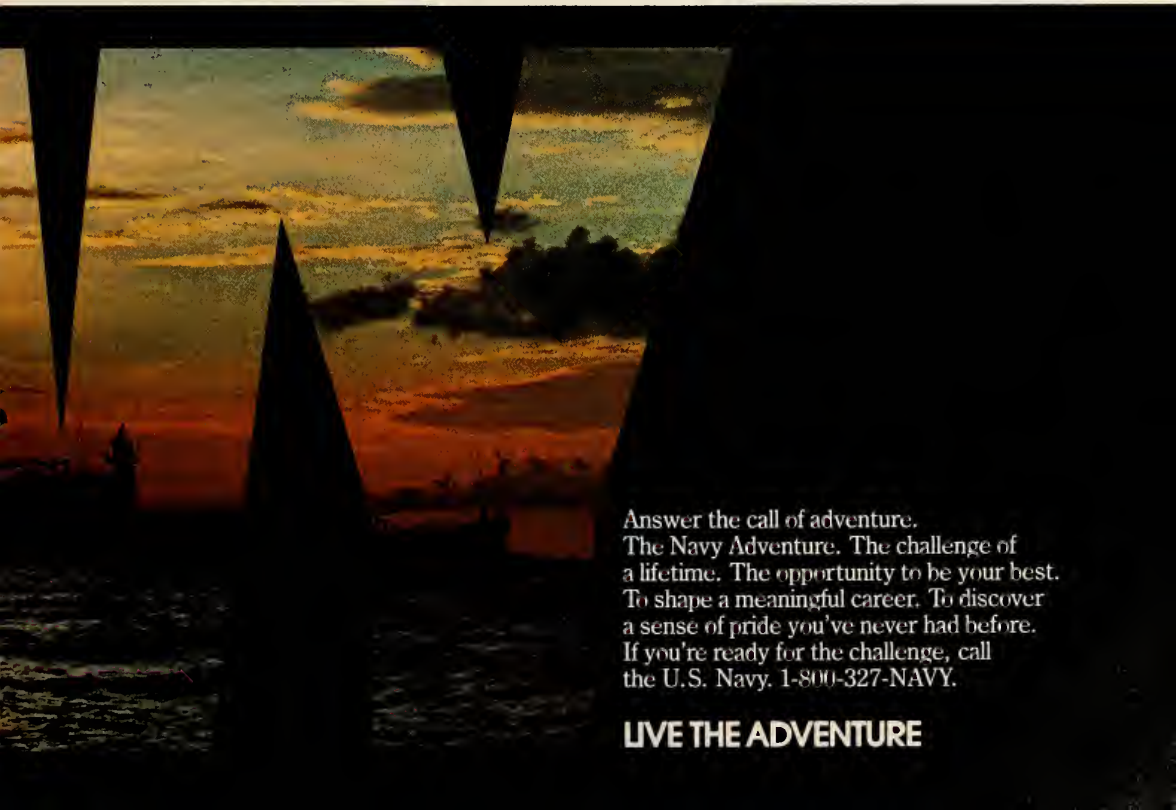
ALTHOUGH times are tough, Eddie Silva is determined to make a go of it. Along with about 140 other students, Eddie is taking classes in Turlock High School's vocational agriculture program.

Eddie already is in a partnership with three of his older brothers. They farm 200 acres of grain and corn near Turlock and also do custom work for other farmers.

What has been Eddie's contribution to the partnership? This year, in his ag mechanics class, he is completing a silage box that the partnership will use in corn chopping. Eddie figured the retail cost of a silage box would be about $4,000. His cost—$2,000 for materials.

According to instructor Dale Pollard, who also heads the school's ag department, Eddie comes in to the ag shop before and after school probably twice a week to work on his project. And that's just this year. In previous years he has constructed a utility trailer, a steer feeder and a parts washer, among other things.

Eddie's dedication to agriculture appears firm. "We've had some hard times, but we've seemed to pull through," Eddie said of the recent bad years on the farm. But he adds, "I'm pretty set on ag. I have to be there," he says of his future. •••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LIVE THE ADVENTURE

Photo by Author

By Andrew Markwart

"FFA members, your national president for 1986-87 is...Kevin Eblen from Creston, Iowa!"

It looked as if someone had pushed a button ejecting Kevin Eblen out of his chair and into the aisle leading to the stage in Kansas City's Municiple Auditorium. A split-second after this 20-year-old sophomore from Iowa State University had become the 60th national FFA president, he appropriately hit the ground running.

Now those memories from last year's national convention are giving way to a full schedule of leadership training sessions, media appearances and banquet speeches. But probably the most important responsibility that Kevin Eblen must shoulder in 1987, along with the other five national officers, is the representation of over 430,000 FFA members during a year that may produce major organizational changes in the FFA.

Shortly after FFA's Board of Directors meeting in January, *The National FUTURE FARMER* asked Kevin for his views on the future of the FFA.

FUTURE FARMER: What are you looking forward to the most this year as national FFA president?

EBLEN: Meeting the people in this organization, the agricultural industry and the general public as I travel throughout America this year.

FUTURE FARMER: What do you hope to accomplish after meeting all of these people and speaking with them?

EBLEN: Right now we're facing some negative attitudes toward the agriculture industry. In the position of an officer, whether it be national, state or chapter, I feel that it is very important for us to portray a positive image of agriculture. Hopefully after this year is over, I can say that I served as a good spokesperson for agriculture and hopefully changed some of those attitudes.

FUTURE FARMER: Throughout your travels this year, a popular question is going to be "Is there really a future in farming?" What is going to be your response to that?

EBLEN: There will always be a future in farming, but whether it will be like it has been in the past is definitely a question. I feel there is going to be some structural changes in agriculture in the future. We must be prepared for whatever those changes may be. We have the interest, the challenge is there—yes, there is a future in agriculture.

FUTURE FARMER: You speak of changes. What changes do you see coming in five to ten years?

EBLEN: We won't be dealing with American agriculture anymore. We'll be dealing with a global agricultural industry. That proposes some problems in our way of thinking, but I believe we can compete with other countries in the world market.

FUTURE FARMER: In January, you co-chaired an FFA Board of Directors' meeting where major organizational policies are set. You appear to be an action oriented person, and yet many of the hottest issues were referred to committees for study until the July board meeting. How do you feel about that?

EBLEN: One thing that we must remember is that if we move too fast, we're going to make mistakes. Right now, we do not need to take fast action that is not thought through. We can't make quick decisions that will have long-term effects on this organization. It's a little different operating on a national scene, as I have discovered serving with the board of directors. It is important to move slowly, in a well thought-out process. That is something that I have had to adjust to because I am a person that moves forward very quickly. On the national scene, that is not always the best thing to do.

FUTURE FARMER: But isn't there a general feeling of "Where we are now isn't where we want to be"? Shouldn't the organization be getting on with the matters at hand rather than continuing these studies?

EBLEN: I think it is very clear, in many instances, that where we are right now isn't where we want to be, but that poses the question "Where *do* we want to be?" and I don't think we have all the answers for that at this time. When the July board meeting rolls around, many of those committees will have final reports in hand so, hopefully, we'll be able to get

Kevin Eblen talks about change in the FFA.

...And Report Back to You, Mr. President

down to the nuts and bolts of what direction we need to move in...after we get those committee reports and referendums in hand.

FUTURE FARMER: You're from Iowa, a state known for wanting rapid change in the FFA. How do you think that affects your input to the board and overall public representation as FFA president?

EBLEN: In the travels I have had thus far, people have been labeling Kevin Eblen as a person that is going to go along with what many individuals are saying in Iowa—wanting and needing the change right now. I'm not saying that I do not support some of the ideas, but I do have a mind of my own.

Let's look at the name for instance. If we're talking about changing the name of the organization, that may be good and that may be bad. Whether it is or not, at least it gets people thinking of ideas how to better market the image of vocational agriculture and the FFA. And if we're thinking about those ideas, then we're moving forward. Right now, that's probably one of the best things we're doing. But, yes, I have been labeled a national president that is out to change everything.

FUTURE FARMER: Is that true?

EBLEN: Kevin Eblen is out to do what is right for the organization. If we need a name change, and it comes down in July or whenever, then I will support it. If we do not need a name change, and it would have deteriorating effects on our organization—after we find out all of these committee reports—then no, I don't support a name change.

FUTURE FARMER: Change is difficult, isn't it?

EBLEN: Definitely. All this talk about change has got a lot of people to the point where they're choosing sides in this organization. We've got one side that says "Yes, we want changes" and we have another side that says "No, we don't" and it becomes an emotional issue. If we're going to get anything accomplished and move forward, then we've got to have some continuity in the people of this organization. The more we can talk, look at both sides and be open-minded about this year and the changes that are going on, the better off we're going to be. We've got to get the masses agreeing on what we need to do.

FUTURE FARMER: What will be the key to it all?

EBLEN: The word is "open-minded." That means me, the local chapter advisor, the members, the people in ag education and whomever it applies to. Let's look at the situation and evaluate before we take a side or make a change that might not be for the best.

FUTURE FARMER: It's no secret that this is a time of change for the FFA. Where do you see us going?

EBLEN: I feel that we're getting much more technology-oriented in the organization and that is just consistent with what is happening in the agriculture industry. Our movement is going to be parallel with the advances in technology we see in American agriculture. The FFA's tradition is going to be the same no matter what. I don't think we're going to change a lot of things in the FFA. We're still going to prepare leadership qualities in our members. What we may see are some vast changes in what we're learning in our vocational agriculture classes. I also believe one of our biggest problems is that we don't market what we're doing — our program — good enough.

FUTURE FARMER: American agriculture has seen some very difficult times in the 1980s, especially the past couple of years. Do you think that in some ways, it has been a healthy time for the industry—that maybe people are reconsidering what American agriculture is all about?

EBLEN: If we don't look at it as a healthy time for the industry, then we are not going to solve any of our problems. I think that some of the changes we are going through, some of the negative experiences we have had, are for the good in the sense that its effects on agriculture are effecting the direction that we are taking in this organization. I haven't been around for 30 years in this organization, but I can see that in the past six or seven years that there's been many strides taken in becoming more aware of what direction we're taking. If we go through tough times, it makes us think, well, what do we need to be doing?

•••

Kevin Eblen, national FFA president, addresses members during the closing moments of last year's national convention (facing page). He emphasizes a point at a January FFA Board of Directors' meeting (right). *Photo by Bill Stagg*

Big Dreams, Big Business

A creative new vo-ag class helps FFA members learn how to make their way in the real world by owning and operating their own businesses.

By Michael Wilson

JUST west of Kokomo, Indiana, and light years from the corporate world of New York and Chicago, a small but spirited vocational agriculture class is learning the ins and outs of making it big in business.

While it may not be Wall Street, the dreams of owning and operating a business are every bit as important to the Indiana FFA members enrolled in a unique new vo-ag class called, "How to start and operate your own business."

How's it working? Just ask:

- Ronnie Orem, who someday plans to expand his father's farm truck sales and repair service into a grain truck salvage enterprise.
- Brett Etherington, who is learning how to make a bona fide business out of his summer lawn-care service.
- Mike Sherrod, whose dream is to own and operate his own mechanics and manufacturing facility after college. He's already designed a blueprint for the building he plans to construct someday.
- Tracy Etherington, who has already developed a business plan to market exotic show cattle to customers across the country.
- Reg Gilbert, who plans to rent eight acres of corn ground from his dad and grow sod for new businesses going up around the community.

"Good business skills will apply to life," sums up Don Connelly, instructor and creator of the entrepreneurship class at Western High School, near Russiaville, Indiana. It's a no-nonsense approach to teaching economic and business principles—situated in a farm community desperate for a shot in the economic arm.

Last fall, Connelly obtained an $800 mini-grant from the Indiana Department of Education to develop a vo-ag course on entrepreneurship. The course involves a systematic approach to the study of economic principles such as profit, risk and supply and demand as they relate to a proposed small farm-related enterprise.

Mind, Muscle, Money

Connelly's teaching philosophy for the class centers on three principles: mind, muscle and money resources. Each student is required to create a business plan, and set goals for his hypothetical business. Throughout, students must wrestle with several difficult questions: Should I purchase a business or build one? What type of business should it be? Where will I find capital?

In one respect, the class reflects a new spirit in agriculture: teaching students business and economic principles that will help them stay ahead of hard times and find creative, ingenious, marketable, profitable futures.

"It teaches them not to see boundaries," says Connelly, "but to use their interests as springboards directly into careers and professions."

The course will also help people who work for someone else. "I think they'll be better prepared to work with and understand the problems of small businessmen in the community," Connelly says.

He and two Purdue University professors, Howard Doster and William Hamilton, developed the curriculum and materials. They call their text "The Creative Young Entrepreneur." Teachers who are interested in the materials can write to: "The Creative Young Entrepreneur," 111 Circle Lane, West Lafayette, Indiana, 47906.

Hamilton says the vo-ag classroom is a natural environment for teaching business and economic principles. "For years vo-ag has taught how to manage a small enterprise, such as a pig project or corn acreage," he says. "I think this course broadens that base and emphasizes management skills."

In some ways, the class is similar to a "traditional" vo-ag class. As with SOE programs, students must keep careful accounting records. But here, profit and loss is the all-important factor. Connelly

Photos by Author

Instructor Don Connelly and senior Brett Etherington run through a business simulation on the school library's computer. Above left, Ronnie Orem hopes to expand his dad's mechanics business by venturing into the truck/auto salvage business.

says students understand this concept better after studying spreadsheets and working a computerized business simulation.

Connelly likes to prepare students for the real world, so each Friday his class listens to "established" entrepreneurs—business owners who went out and made a name for themselves with little more than a dream and a loan.

"The speakers have shown us you don't have to have a lot of money to start up your own business," says student Ronnie Orem. "Most of them have started their businesses in the back of a garage."

It is this scrappy, risk-taking attitude that Connelly hopes to instill in each student.

Sagging farm economy

In the 1970s, when many farmers prospered, Ray Orem farmed and sold grain trucks to other farmers. But recent hard times have made truck sales virtually impossible. Orem began selling used truck parts and providing maintenance. He fully supports what his son Ronnie is learning in Connelly's class.

"I'm excited about this class, because it teaches building a business from start to finish," says Mr. Orem. While he admits the class won't make entrepreneurs out of every student, the business and economics training won't hurt.

Instructor Connelly discusses his formula of "Mind, Muscle and Money" for starting a business venture with students Brian Sewell (left), Mike Sherrod (center) and Tracy Etherington (right).

"Not every kid can employ himself," says Orem. "On the other hand, there's probably never been a better time for a kid to be able to zero-in and think about what he can do in a business enterprise on his own. Being able to employ yourself makes these students less dependent on a job from someone else. They can stand on their own two feet."

"There aren't any other classes like this at Western. General business doesn't include the entrepreneur aspect of starting your own firm."

Orem says today's farmers face a stark reality: many of them must farm and hold down a second job.

"You probably can't find 1 out of 15 farmers around here who don't also have an outside income," he says. Tom Etherington, a nearby livestock and grain farmer, agrees. "I think agriculture is not supportive right now, so we've had to go somewhere else to supplement the farm income.

"I think farm skills are so diverse: carpentry, mechanics, accounting—it shows these students that there's more to farming than driving a tractor across the field. They can capitalize on some of these opportunities through this entrepreneurship class."

Tom's son, Tracy Etherington, is one of Connelly's students. Tracy says he really didn't know what to expect when he enrolled in the class. So far it's been eye-opening.

"There aren't any other classes like this at Western," says the sophomore. "We have general business, but that doesn't include the entrepreneur aspect of starting your own firm."

Fellow classmate Mike Sherrod, says, "I'm finding out there's a lot more to running a business than most people know, like legal aspects, insurance and start-up captial."

Tracy's brother, Brett Etherington, is also in Connelly's class. He started mowing lawns last summer and has already found ways to improve his business this summer, such as work scheduling, planning ahead, and advertising. He wants to expand his mowing business, and thinks the class has been a real benefit.

And Connelly thinks the class has been a benefit too—to the students, community and himself as well. He hopes other vo-ag instructors will follow his lead and increase their business and economics curriculum.

"I think we have an opportunity," he says. "It's critical to capitalize on it and take the lead. Vo-ag has been doing things so right for so long, it's been overlooked." •••

Tracy Etherington (left) and his brother, Brett, were among the first enrolled in the entrepreneurship class. Tracy's business goal is to market exotic breeds of cattle; Brett is expanding his lawn care service.

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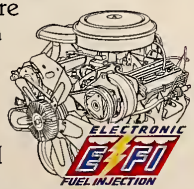

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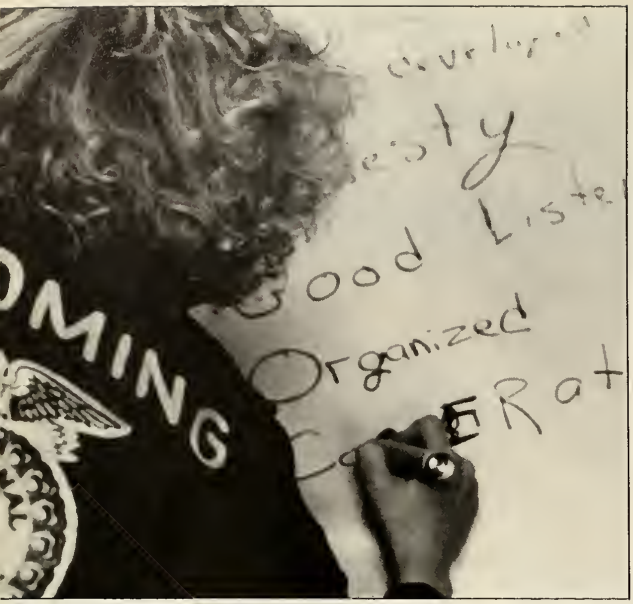

Everyone gets involved when Washington Conference participants trade ideas in leadership workshops.

A Summer of Discovery

The national leadership training program for FFA members can make a chapter come alive.

EVERY summer since 1969, hundreds of FFA members from across the U.S. travel to Washington, D.C., to participate in FFA's Washington Conference Program (WCP). Last year alone, over 1,500 students representing more than 900 chapters, spent a week of discovery in the nation's capital. What's the attraction?

In one intense week, these members build new, lasting friendships as they participate in leadership workshops and tour the Washington, D.C. area. As they return home, it's clear they leave with more pride in the FFA, their country and most importantly, themselves.

The purpose of the conference is to build strong leadership in the FFA, but it accomplishes more than that. People change after they've attended the conference. They feel better about themselves and their future, and with all of the pressures we live with today, an eager attitude toward life is an accomplishment in itself.

The Workshops

At the heart of the conference are nine personal development and leadership workshops. These workshops are grouped into three areas: "Developing a Sharper Image," "Effective Leadership" and "Meeting the Challenge."

A staff of ten counselors, hand-picked FFA members from previous years' conferences, conduct the workshops and coordinate everything from sightseeing tours to airport travel.

In "Developing a Sharper Image," members work on self esteem, being comfortable with themselves and how positive attitudes can make the difference between success and failure. Tips on appearance and etiquette help them establish a strong public image. After these sessions, the focus turns to working with others. Participants work with each other on developing listening and conversation skills, and how to develop lasting relationships with people.

"Effective Leadership" workshops help members identify leadership traits, qualities and team concepts. They also work on communication skills, both verbal and non-verbal, writing, and working with the media. The importance of goal setting and planning are also covered.

In the final group of workshops, "Meeting the Challenge," FFA members learn how to apply their WCP experiences back in their chapter. By using real-life situations, members learn how to work through problems and establish solutions in their home chapter. Members are exposed to the varied and changing careers in agriculture and work on developing a career plan.

Although the workshops are fast-paced and stimulating, a trip to Washington, D.C., wouldn't be complete without seeing some of the most historic and important buildings in America. WCP participants visit the U.S. Capitol where they meet their congressmen. They also tour Mt. Vernon, Arlington National Cemetery, the Lincoln, Jefferson and Washington Memorials, the Smithsonian Institution museums, and the National FFA Center. At the FFA Center, the groups are usually welcomed by National FFA Advisor Larry Case.

The Facts

The five-day programs begin this year on June 15 and continue through the week of July 27. There is no program during the Fourth of July week.

Any chapter FFA member who will be in high school this fall can attend WCP. There is a limit of three members per chapter for each session, except for the first and fifth weeks, when enrollment is unlimited. Once FFA members have participated in WCP they cannot repeat the program.

There is a separate program for FFA advisors at the conference. They meet with FFA Center staff to get an update on new FFA programs. This year, they will have the opportunity of working with computer specialists for a day to answer any questions on software, hardware and anything else related to computer technology.

The cost to attend WCP is $340 for FFA members and $260 for advisors. This conference fee covers room, meals, sightseeing tours and conference materials only and does not include transportation costs to and from Washington.

For most people, $340 sounds like a lot of money. It is, but scholarships are available through the National FFA Foundation and the National FFA Alumni Association. Each state FFA office has a listing of what scholarships are available.

To participate in this year's Washington Conference Program, applications must be at the National FFA Center by June 1. The applications are included in a brochure that chapters should have received in March. •••

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Holding On

Farm machinery industry leaders are shaping up for survival in bleak market

THE farm equipment industry has weathered its fourth consecutive down year and its leaders are facing their toughest business decisions. Continued weakness of the ag sector means continued difficulties for farm equipment manufacturers.

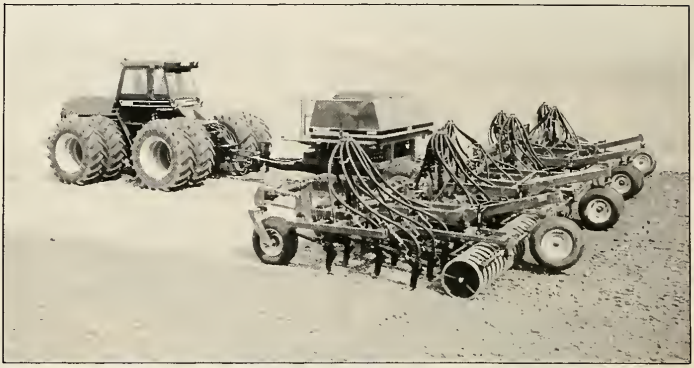
New approaches from different companies range from concentrating on the fast-paced sales of under-40 hp tractors to dealer development for better customer service. In short, each company is striking out for the niche it perceives to provide the most benefit.

Case IH is focusing on inventory reduction and new manufacturing controls aimed at trimming costs 25 percent over the next five years. Jerry Green, Case IH president, looks for modest market improvement in 1987, "I think the market has hit bottom and will be somewhat better in 1987, perhaps 5 percent. But that's 5 percent better than 1986 and 1986 wasn't a good year." Case IH recently expanded its 4-wheel-drive line by acquiring Steiger Tractor.

Krause Plow Corporation is diversifying into the waste handling business, where company President Richard Parker sees market opportunities. "We put one of our top people on investigating diversification opportunities...At the end of all these investigations we felt waste management products were something we could produce and we feel...there is room for growth," Parker says.

Ford Tractor is spending much of its time and energy consolidating its operations with New Holland to create the new company Ford New Holland, Inc. While concentrating on those administrative details, the company has also introduced two new dealer development programs aimed at improving service to the retail customer. The first is the Service Excellence Program, a system that evaluates the level of service offered at every Ford dealership and the second is the Technical Service Hotline providing dealers service help quickly over the phone.

Kubota Tractor is expanding into new markets as its position in the small tractor market matures. The company is facing increased pressure on sales margins as the "super" yen eats at the dollar. To counter the yen, S. Egusa, Kubota's president, sees a three-prong approach: retail price increase, sales volume increase and cost reductions.



Like the farmers they manufacture for, Case IH is cutting their production costs and overhead to turn a better profit. Pictured above are Case IH's 4894 four-wheel drive tractor pulling an 8500 air hoe drill.

Because of the growing popularity of small, part-time farming, demand for smaller, lighter tractors is big. Companies like White Farm are filling that demand with under-40 horsepower diesels, at left.

Allied Products, the company that now provides almost a complete line of farm equipment under five names is fine tuning its operations and maintaining profits. Incorporation of White Farm Equipment and Lilliston into corporate operations have been important moves in 1986 and the company is still looking for more acquisitions. Says Bobby Middlebrooks, Allied Products senior vice president, "We're looking at a couple of opportunities now. We're always willing to talk to companies."

Gehl Company is another firm buying new product lines to build market position. Recent acquisition of Owatonna Manufacturing Company provides the company with a self-propelled windrower, a mower/conditioner line and makes Gehl the first company to offer both a fixed- and variable-chamber round baler. Why the expansion? Bernard Nielsen, Gehl president, remarks, "We needed to move forward and acquire and develop products to add to our distribution so that we could fully serve our distribution network and customers."

Massey Combines Corporation is a new company, spun off from Varity Corporation in May, 1986. The company is laboring under both high debt and heavy inventories, but is working its way through the problems. Industry analysts don't give the company much hope for survival but Ivan Porter, Massey Combines president, disagrees, "My answer to that is, if we were going to (go out of business) why did we introduce a new range of rotary combines? Why did we buy a new engineering center? There's more to this than the eye can see."

Massey-Ferguson, Inc., Varity's tractor manufacturer and marketer, is taking a very focused approach to today's market, concentrating on smaller tractors. This focused approach includes innovative

(Continued on Page 32)

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"Hidden Harvests" Shows America Ag Opportunities

New trends highlighted in national FFA TV Special

"HIDDEN Harvests," the National FFA Television Special, offered 10 Midwest states and Washington, D.C., a view of "how American agriculture is finding its future." Hosted by actor Eddie Albert, the program revealed new opportunities emerging and the role education is playing in the industry's massive transition.

The special half-hour presentation was broadcast across America's heartland the week of March 7-15 through sponsorship of the Monsanto Agricultural Company. The special played in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, Tennessee, Wisconsin and Washington, D.C.

"We found some examples of those who are applying the latest technology to agriculture at the grassroots level as well as some individuals like Jack Anderson and Dr. Earl Joseph who can really get you to think about what the future of agriculture might be like," says K. Elliott Nowels, producer of the show.

The program title, "Hidden Harvests," refers to the bright spots shaking out in the industry of agriculture. Agricultural educators say many career areas—ag finance, accounting, food service, biotechnology, genetics, computer technology, exports, ag law—offer tremendous opportunities to young and old alike. But because much of the public has a limited view of agriculture, many of these pockets of opportunity go entirely unnoticed.

Portions of Hidden Harvests featured:

- Interviews with futurist Dr. Earl Joseph, Congressman Kika de la Garza (House Agricultural Committee chairman) and Jack Anderson, columnist and proponent of the Young Astronauts Council—an effort to infuse the excitement of space into school science instruction.
- Scenes of 6,000 farmers attending the "ADAPT 100" diversification conference hosted by *Successful Farming* magazine in Des Moines and a chat with Rich Krumme, editor.
- The story of FFA member Steve Cameron, who writes agricultural software programs in tiny Lyons, Ohio.
- A visit to Emerald Acres—a family farm operation surviving by adding value to a commodity and marketing the high-quality result to a demand that is likely to grow worldwide.
- Comments from students and faculty of the Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences, a school located in the heart of the city that serves 240 students geared to ag careers.
- Scenes of high-tech/biotech research currently being done at America's universities.

Program airs "Hidden" ag careers

"We want to provide a national context for educational efforts that the 8,200 FFA chapters can undertake on the local level," said Coleman Harris, national FFA executive secretary. "Agriculture is changing, not dying. We have to dispel some of the myths about agriculture that are held as truths by the general public."

The result, says Harris, will be more young people entering the diversified careers available in America's largest industry. "While there are some big financial problems for some, we've also got to remember that there's an upside to the current transition. There will be an agriculture in the future—and it will be thriving agriculture."

The program is for sale in videocassette form for $37.50 through Project Clear Window, Inc., 210 Church Street, S.E., Leesburg, Virginia 22075.

A kit was sent to every FFA chapter in the areas where Hidden Harvests was run. It contained news releases, posters, brochures and an announcement ready for use by the local newspaper.

"Last year, a great number of chapters indicated that they had taped "Conflict of Interest" and used it in everything from school board meetings to FFA chapter banquets," says Harris. "In some instances, I know that show aided students in getting the point across about keeping vo-ag strong in their schools."

•••

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The Mechanical Mind

National ag mech winner Jesse Davis has the tools—motivation, drive and experience—to launch a high-tech career in ag engineering and research

Jesse Davis, 1986 national agricultural mechanics proficiency winner is working on a USDA sponsored research project to build a better crop sprayer at Purdue University.

JESSE Davis would be the first to admit he's not big on flash or hype. But when it comes to ambition and responsibility, Jesse's got the tools to succeed. Give him a tractor or truck that needs an overhaul, and Jesse's wheels begin turning.

Perhaps that's one of the reasons why Jesse Davis, from Frankfort, Indiana, earned the national proficiency award in agricultural mechanics last year. And reason, too, why most people who know the unassuming FFA member, have come to expect great things from him.

"Jesse Davis is the most outstanding agricultural mechanics student I have taught in my ten years of teaching," says Ralph Walker, Jesse's vo-ag instructor at Clinton Central High School, Michigantown, Indiana.

In high school, Jesse led his chapter ag mechanics team to a gold emblem in the national contest. He also placed first in the Indiana state ag mechanics contest and ninth in the national contest two years ago.

"He has a very high aptitude for mechanical things," adds Mr. Walker. "His interests and enthusiasm has carried over to other members of our chapter."

Jesse's father, Robert Davis, always encouraged his son to get involved. But besides farming, Mr. Davis also works as a truck driver, so Jesse often found himself taking on responsibility at an early age.

"I had to learn to do a lot of mechanical work on my own, because Dad was gone a lot of times," he says. "He expected me to go ahead and do the work.

"I believe experience is the best teacher," says Jesse, a 20-year-old Purdue University sophomore. "I was always encouraged to make my own decisions. I am at the point now that I can tear down engines alone and put them back together."

The bulk of Jesse's mechanical work takes place on his family's farm near Frankfort. Here, in a large, well-equipped machine shed guarded by Jesse's Doberman, Smoky, he's assembled an ambitious resume of engine and machinery fix-it projects that would impress the most professional mechanic.

During recent weekends, Jesse comes home from college to overhaul a farm truck engine. Pieces of the engine spill across a table like a jigsaw puzzle. In another part of the shed, you'll find projects yet to be completed: a 1937 F-20 Farmall tractor that Jesse plans to restore, or a John Deere 55 EB combine he plans to repaint by next harvest. Jesse built a split-level wood addition to this part of the shed, and used an old I-beam and plow frame for support. He did it to provide more storage.

"It takes curiosity, a willingness to learn new things and not be afraid to make mistakes."

A visitor notices that all the tools—and there are hundreds—hang uniformly in place along the wall or find a home in well-constructed bins. You see several cartoon paintings—the road runner, coyote, Elmer Fudd, for example—on cabinet doors and other equipment. Jesse loves to draw and paint these figures—and he's pretty good at it, too.

As a sophomore studying ag mechanization, Jesse is looking forward to math and ag engineering courses, vocational classes dealing with engines, and specific courses like the Hydraulics and Transmissions class he's in this semester. Right now he's most interested in ag engineering and research. He's working on a USDA-sponsored project at Purdue focusing on electrostatic crop sprayers.

"This technology will electrically charge spray particles so you can spray without drift," he says excitedly. "The spray will fall directly on the plant. Farmers won't have to band-apply chemicals because the spray will cling to the top and bottom of the plant."

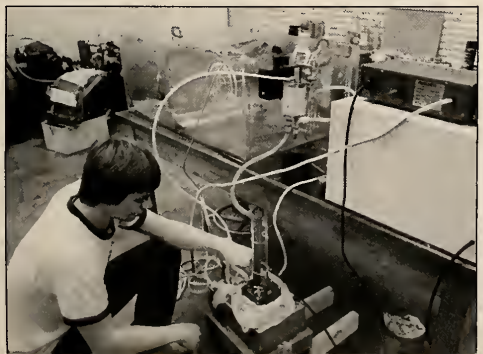
Jesse says someday the research he performs will lead to technology that cuts herbicide use in half. "That'll really be a savings for farmers, and dirt won't clog sprayers nearly the way it does in conventional sprayers now," he says.

Does it take a special knack to work with sophisticated computers and sensing equipment? Maybe so, But Jesse says some very common characteristics are also important.

"It takes curiosity, a willingness to learn new things and not be afraid to make mistakes," he says. "You have to be willing to get involved and take a risk. If you try something and it doesn't work, try another way of doing it.

"Nobody's going to get it perfect the first time around anyway. It takes a lot of persistence."

Which may explain above all why Jesse Davis has come so far, so fast, after all. Without flash or hype. •••



Jesse measures the effectiveness of electrically charging spray particles. This technology would reduce spray drifting, an environmental and cost problem.

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The Land

(Continued from page 11)

The Land's Ginny Mann shows FFA members Bonnie Owens (left) and Tony Willis (right) how entomologists are using eggs from encarsia, a beneficial parasitic wasp, as part of their Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program. The eggs are stuck to the small cards hanging from the tomato plants. When hatched, encarsia attack the white fly, a common greenhouse pest.

definitive future of production agriculture; the main purpose is illustrated agricultural principles for the general public. "The majority of people in the United States—98 percent of them now—are not involved in production agriculture," said Robitaille. "A lot of people come through here and see, for the first time, some of the major crop plants grown in the U.S. and other parts of the world.

"What we're trying to do with the growing systems in the show is not, in any way, to say 'This is the farm of the future.' We don't even attempt that," said Robitaille. "What we're trying to do is show alternatives—creative, imaginative new approaches to growing plants. The goal is to make people think."

Random interviews of people leaving EPCOT indicate The Land is achieving that goal. Visitors exiting EPCOT frequently cite The Land as the most impressive exhibit, compared to the rare few that are aware of it as they enter the park. "This means they're now thinking of food production as an integral part of our future, which it always has been, but people have taken it for granted," said Robitaille. "This, I hope, has got to lead to support for agricultural programs, research, extension—everything."

He says the best support comes from farmers that tour the pavilion. "They know you can't grow tomatoes (cost-effectively) that way, but they go home thinking a little differently and more creatively about their own operation." •••

Machinery Outlook

(Continued from page 26)

selling techniques and increased emphasis on marketing. Says John Ruth, M-F president, "We have a 500,000-name customer and prospect list we have been developing for several years. There are demographics for that list so we can... promote specific merchandising programs."

Hesston Corporation, majority-owned by Fiat since 1977, now is directly controlled by a Fiat company president. Mario Chessa is increasing corporate efforts to control costs and increase profit potential for the Kansas firm. "Fiat is made up of ambitious people, but they are also realistic. They know the market will not turn tomorrow but they will work for a slow evolution rather than a revolution. Someday we hope to be the challengers for John Deere and Case IH," Chessa says.

Deutz-Allis looks on its consumer products lines as a source of profit potential in 1987 and beyond. Bill Templeton, the company's new vice president of marketing, recently joined from Kubota and remarks Deutz-Allis has what it takes to be a growing company in this market. Focus on consumer products means adding new utility products from Deutz-Allis' Japanese supplier Toyosha and from its U.S. supplier Simplicity. "We have a long history (as a consumer products) supplier, we are not new to this market," Templeton notes.

Deere and Company is happy to be celebrating its 125th anniversary this year, but Boyd Bartlett, Deere's president isn't counting on a quick turnaround to the current trend. Bartlett says Deere sees this market continuing weak, but adds the "patient is not dead." He adds, "We see 1987 level with 1986 and we don't look for much of a turnaround in 1988 or 1989." •••

Article courtesy of Farm Equipment *magazine.*

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Chapter Scoop

by Jack Pitzer

Troy, PA, is starting a weekly radio show to inform the community about environmental issues, community living, pets, FFA activities, wildlife, ag industry and gardening. It will be aired every Friday at 9:30 a.m. on WJOZ.

N-N-N

Square dance teams from **State College,** PA, FFA performed in the folk dance festival as part of the state farm show in January. After they danced, they also attended the state FFA mid-winter convention.

N-N-N

About 20 **Meridian,** ID, members showed up to paint the rain gutters and trim of the livestock building at the fairgrounds. A fair board contributed the paint. Although lots of paint went on the building, some managed to get on plants, people and cats.

N-N-N

The 31 Greenhands of **Carlsbad,** NM, FFA were auctioned in a "slave sale" and raised $400.

N-N-N

An annual cookout and hoedown sponsored by **McLean County,** KY, FFA and FHA has grown to be a fun event. Local square dance club members come help teach the members the dance steps.

N-N-N

FFA and FHA officers in **Wessington Springs,** SD, had a friendly competition with parliamentary procedure. FFA won and so the FHA officers had to buy lunch. (This news item arrived at the FFA Center via the Ag Ed Network.)

N-N-N

Local chapters online with the computer network can always submit news articles to Stargram address FF100A.

N-N-N

Upperclass members of the **Lake Hamilton,** AR, Chapter in Hot Springs have developed an "Adopt a Greenhand" program. The older members help the new members get involved in chapter activities.

N-N-N

The incentive of a free ski trip for any member who sold 50 boxes may have helped the **Hereford,** TX, FFA sell $28,000 worth of oranges, apples, pears and grapefruit.

In an effort to introduce the FFA to different groups within the city, the **West Fork,** AR, Chapter planned a dinner meeting with a parliamentary procedure demonstration for the Lions Club, the school board and the city council.

N-N-N

At the fund-raiser dance sponsored by **Lancaster,** WI, FFA, they gave a 50 cents discount to members of other chapters who had their FFA membership card.

N-N-N

Twelve **Georgetown,** OH, members developed seed plots for the local Quail Unlimited group. The plots support quail population in the area.

N-N-N

Kuna, ID, stimulated participation in the holiday food drive by offering a pizza feed for the class that brings in the most food per person in the class. Ag 1-second hour won!

N-N-N

For their December chapter meeting, **Kuna** offered members the chance to watch two popular movies. The recreation committee provided the popcorn.

N-N-N

Genoa, OH, sent a team of members to a trapshooting contest sponsored by the **Anthony Wayne** FFA and won with 88 points.

N-N-N

Advisor Wilson was "Marryin' Sam" at the Sadie Hawkins dance organized by **Elgin,** OR, FFA. He "married" 28 couples that night.

N-N-N

Wells, NV, bought a new cotton candy machine to use for fund (fun) raising.

N-N-N

Well, it was different, but it was successful. The **East Troy,** WI, sold "cowpies" as a fund raiser. (Actually, they were candy concoctions made with chocolate, peanuts and caramel.)

N-N-N

A true or false trivia question in the **Antelope,** AZ, Chapter newsletter is "A dicot is a bed with two mattresses."

N-N-N

The two inches of fresh snow and 10 degrees didn't stop plans for a football game after the November chapter meeting for **Litchfield,** MN, FFA.

Black River, OH, Chapter earned $230 from the 25,750 pounds of scrap steel they were allowed to sell from the property of the local feed and grain business.

N-N-N

Harlan, IA, FFA offered their services to the community to clean up any houses that were vandalized on Halloween.

N-N-N

Kathleen High School Chapter in Lakeland, FL, has invited all the students from the three feeder schools in their area to the land laboratory and ag department to learn more about vo-ag. They have an extensive program planned.

N-N-N

The **Granton,** WI, FFA released 12 homing pigeons as part of Food for America demonstration at school.

N-N-N

Elmwood, IL, FFA members raised money for an abused children's fund by helping with a Santa Store—where only kids could shop for their parents.

N-N-N

Medina, ND, used a booth and a float to promote FFA during their community's fall festival.

N-N-N

Before **Mineral County,** WV, sent food and gifts to the local hospitals and nursing homes, they sent two-member teams to visit first. The teams learned of the special things the FFA could do.

N-N-N

The **Finley-Sharon,** ND, Chapter sent in their pledge for the Statue of Liberty drive.

N-N-N

Rimrock, ID, Chapter used the SCS's new no-till drill for the chapter's winter wheat plot; ran a turkey shoot and made $200 to use for leadership activities; and helped with the harvest of the sugar beet research plots at the local sugar company.

N-N-N

Two friends of the **Scott County,** KY, Chapter in Georgetown have attended 47 consecutive chapter banquets—Mr. Clarence Southworth and Mr. G. W. Cassity.

N-N-N

There can be no letup. Chapter reporters and advisors should continue the flow of news and ideas. Give one, get one.

If you knew what he knows, you'd own a Ford, too

Nobody is in a better position to evaluate a tractor than the farmer who uses it, day in and day out, in all kinds of conditions.

So we track the performance of Ford tractors for up to five years after purchase. We also ask an independent research firm to interview farmers about their tractors. Year after year, the answers come back the same—Ford mid-size (30-90 horsepower) tractors are at the top of the list in owner satisfaction for reliability, durability, maintenance, serviceability and quality.

To stay there, Ford tractors have to get better every year. And they do. Ford tractors recorded a remarkable 28 percent improvement in overall quality in only two years, as measured by U.S. dealer warranty claims.

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It pays to know all you can before buying a tractor. So, ask a Ford owner about his tractor and his dealer. When you know what he does, we think you'll soon own a Ford, too.

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A Weapon for Agriculture

Biotechnology is aiming at agriculture's problems and offering some answers.

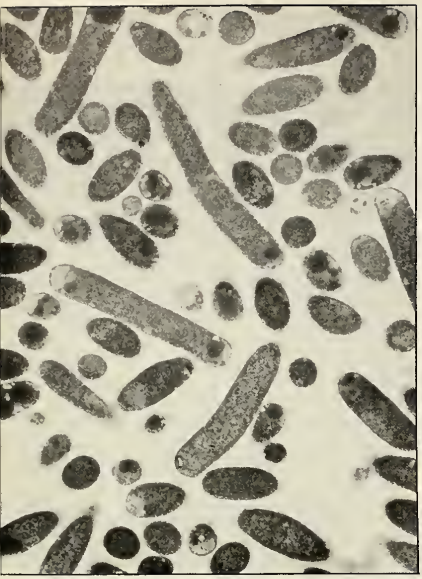

Photo by The Upjohn Company

The E. Coli cells shown above, magnified 21,000 times, are genetically engineered to produce BST, bovine somatotropin (see dark spots within cells) a growth factor found in cattle.

Other Sources of Info About Biotech

- "Glossary of Terms"—To help the nonscientist who wants to be abreast of new developments. Single copies up to ten at no cost. Bulk orders, 11-100, 50 cents each. Over 100, 40 cents. From Industrial Biotechnology Association (IBA), 1625 K Street, N.W., Suite 1100, Washington, DC 20006.
- "Seeds of Success: Biotechnology and Agriculture"—a brochure to familiarize readers with biotech applications as they relate to agriculture—plants and animals. There are explanations about genetic engineering, benefits of biotech, new plants, microbes as farmhands and safety. Available from IBA. Single copies up to ten free, with prices and address same as above.
- "What is Biotechnology?"—a 20-page booklet describing, in nontechnical terms, the science and applications of biotechnology. Cost is $3, also from IBA address listed above.
- Regulating Biotechnology—the theme of the entire Volume 12, Number 8, October, 1986, issue of the *EPA Journal*. Articles in that issue include "Developing Confidence in Biotechnology;" "Biotechnology: Its Potential;" "Biotechnology: Its Possible Dangers;" "Keeping Ahead of a New Technology;" and "Some Possible Uses for Biotechnology." Single copies are $2. From Superintendent of Documents, GPO, Washington, DC 20402.

MANY Americans are watching carefully as discoveries in biotechnology explode around them. No one is more interested than the agricultural community—and certainly this includes FFA members who will manage, operate and control the agriculture of tomorrow.

Biotechnology is the Future.

It is a rapidly growing field that offers unprecedented opportunities to study and understand fundamental life processes and to modify and regulate those processes precisely.

Biotechnology is more than taking a gene from a donor organism and successfully inserting it into another organism. Being able to transfer genes illustrates that science has mastered many of the mysteries of the cell.

We are witnessing the advent of a golden age in agriculture...a "Biological Age" with the potential to do for mankind in the 21st Century what the Machine Age did for industrialization in the 19th Century.

What is Biotechnology?

Biotech is really as old as the hills or as new as the 21st Century, depending on your view. Overall, biotechnology is the application of biological systems and organisms to technical and industrial processes.

Put that way, biotech has been with us since before 6000 B.C. when the Sumerians and the Babylonians tapped the ability of yeast to make alcohol and brew beer.

Also, genetic engineering, a subset of biotech, dates from the mankind's recognition that both animals and plants can be selected and crossed to reproduce and upgrade species.

Biotech is changing research.

The objective of agricultural research for almost all this century has been to increase food production to keep world demand from outstripping food supplies. Now, as we face big supplies of most major commodities, research agendas are changing to increasing profitability and protecting our resources and the environment.

We need biotechnology to help reduce input costs to improve profitability at home and increase access to international markets. We need inexpensive technologies in agriculture since our competitors will use biotechnology to reduce their costs. Japan has made biotechnology a top priority. The U.S. is in serious world competition. Without vigorously pursuing biotechnology, the U.S. might become the high cost producer in a glutted world market.

What are the chief problems with Biotechnology?

Agricultural biotechnology's main problem is that solving one problem may create another. We know far more about disease-causing pathogens, the "bad guys," than about the other 95 percent or more organisms that are either harmless or of potential benefit to agriculture. Until the 1980s, there was little incentive to study non-pathogens, "good guys." We can only make assumptions about what an organism will do in diverse environments. The problem of deliberate release into the environment has polarized viewpoints. It forces agriculture to deal directly with interest groups such as environmentalists, theologians and city dwellers.

One of the most profound challenges that we all face is to overcome the common misapprehensions, or myths, surrounding new biotechnology. Biotechnology myths can be damaging when they confuse or mislead the public. Such myths can cost us dearly in delaying the fruits of new technology that may significantly improve the quality and duration of life.

Releasing biotech products into the environment is not new. There are innumerable examples of successful and beneficial "releases," or uses of live organisms in the environment. Insect release has been used successfully to control troublesome weeds in Hawaii and California. More than a dozen microbial pesticidal agents are approved and registered with EPA, and these organisms are marketed in 75 different products for use in agriculture, forestry and insect control. Bacterial preparations containing Rhizobium bacteria for promoting the growth of leguminous plants have been sold in this country since the beginning of this century. •••

In February, more than 300 people attended a Challenge Forum on Biotechnology convened by Secretary of Agriculture Richard Lyng. Biotechnology leaders from industry, academia, congress, government departments, foreign nations, and farm and science media participated.

This article was prepared by Jack Pitzer from a Forum Summary *published by the USDA Office of Public Liaison.*

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Whoa!!!

In cooperation with the Downtown Kiwanis over 40 stop signs were installed in problem areas on county roads as identified by county commissioners. Lawton, Oklahoma, FFA members were responsible for proper installation and continuous maintenance. Safety in any community is strengthened by support of any and all youth groups. *(From the National Chapter application)* •••

Man's Best Friend

The Preble High School FFA in Green Bay, Wisconsin, donated $34 to the animal shelter for dog food to feed the animals.

The money the chapter raised came from the sale of ice cream in the agriculture classroom. Every week money was collected and put in a fund for dog food. Chad VanLanen presented the check to the animal shelter staff as part of the FFA's BOAC project. •••

Successful Safety Seminars

The Oak Harbor, Ohio, Chapter concentrated on safety programs during the fall of 1986. The chapter hosted and instructed many students and adults in the local area in hunter safety education, trapper education certification and tractor certification.

During the month of October, the chapter hosted a local hunter safety program for first-time hunters and for any person interested in increasing hunting skills. The course was offered during the evenings in the vo-ag room for ten hours. Class members listened to guest speakers, watched movies and studied the hunter safety handbook. There were 30 who completed the course.

During the month of November, 44 were certified as safe trappers with three hours of instruction and completion of the trapper education test.

During the month of December, first year ag classes studied and took the tractor certification course.

The FFA chapter is interested in promoting safety on the farms of Ottawa County and in the fields of the local area. *(Amy Avery, Reporter)* •••

Bein' Neighborly

The Lisbon, New York, Chapter visited the Portville, New York, FFA Chapter from November 28 to December 3, 1986.

The two chapters participated in different activities such as bowling, basketball, volleyball, watching "Spies Like Us" and watching the St. Bonaventure versus Lock Haven basketball game.

Along with having a lot of fun all the members learned a lot from each other. Many ideas were exchanged among the members of each chapter.

Seeing the animal laboratory the Portville Chapter owns and runs was an incentive for the Lisbon Chapter to build one of their own. The Lisbon Chapter gave Portville some ideas on how to effectively start a chapter greenhouse. *(Laurie Hutchins, Secretary)* •••

College Students as Teachers

Undergraduate students at Viginia Tech in Blacksburg, organized the sixth annual FFA Leadership Conference for Virginia FFA. This year 60 chapters and 583 members from Virginia and West Virginia attended.

The FFA conference was the result of a year's work by the undergraduate student organization Agricultural Education Society. The AES is a student organization with a common interest in the advancement of agriculture through education.

Cindy Blair was interviewed by WSET-TV from Lynchburg during the Virginia leadership conference.

A highlight of the conference was a special presentation by Cindy Blair, then national FFA vice president from Noble, Oklahoma, who taught a class entitled "Expanding Your Expectations."

Other topics for classes ranged from the use of parliamentary procedure and public speaking to the future of American agriculture.

The 1986-87 Virginia State FFA officers also assisted with the conference. They presented a slide show entitled "The American Farmer," as well as helping Tech students teach the individual classes.

Conference sponsors were Diversified Marketing Associates, Inc.; Ruritan National; Seald Sweet Growers; Sovran Bank and Virginia Farm Bureau Federation. *(John Hillison, Advisor)* •••

Bee-Lieve It Or Not

FFA members everywhere carry out a Supervised Occupational Experience Program. The objective is to increase their agricultural learning experience by doing. It is a real life situation but sometimes risks are hard to manage or even anticipate.

Bill Jernigan, of the Willcox, Arizona, Chapter, will testify to that. His SOEP was bees.

When we had to move his bees to keep them out of the spray pattern of a grasshopper control program, he selected a site that had plenty of nectar plants, water, shade and a sturdy corral. It seemed like an ideal spot.

He never dreamed that he was moving them into a migratory route of the black bear. The bears found the apiary as convenient as a weary traveler would find a fast-food restaurant on the interstate. Bee boxes and empty combs littered the mountainside. Out of 17 stands, Bill was able to salvage only 3 stands. *(Page Bakarich, Advisor)* •••

Four on the Floor

The Colby, Wisconsin, Chapter sponsored a donkey basketball game as a fund raiser. The school letterwinners were the champions as they beat the faculty in the title match. *(Patti Massop, President)* •••

Meaningful Demonstrations

A demonstration contest was held for the western Pennsylvania regional FFA chapters. The team competition was a

(Continued on Page 40)

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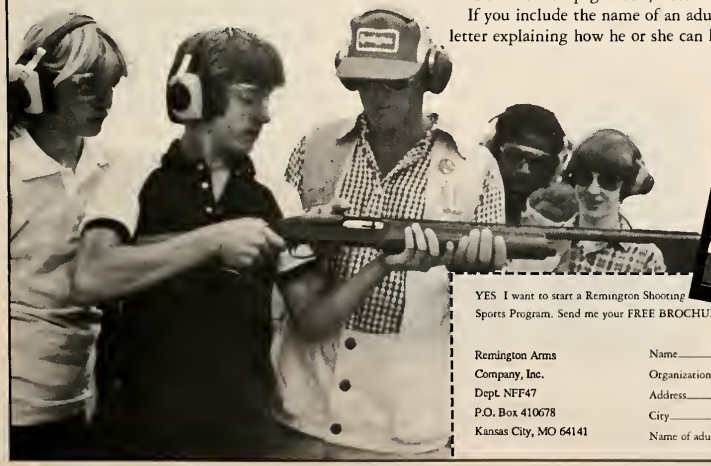

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 (Pick up ACTION from Page 39)

warm-up for the statewide farm show competition in January.

The teams placed as follows: Blackhawk FFA placed first with a demonstration on water filters; Mohawk FFA placed second on the topic of greenhouse heating; Grove City FFA placed third with farm safety as their topic; and Mercer Crossroads FFA placed fourth telling how to plant a garden. The contest was sponsored by Penn Power Electric Company. *(Gary Jean, Mohawk Reporter)* •••

Weekend Wonders

The Peoria, Arizona, Chapter held its annual Mini-Leadership Camp, January 16-17, for any FFA member in the state.

The camp is designed to help members become leaders and to help motivate them to be involved in the FFA.

The Peoria Chapter hosted about 150 members from around the state. Included in the camp program were a dance, workshops, volleyball, a foot rodeo and a banquet at the end.

National FFA President Kevin Eblen gave the key address.

The cost to the camper is $15 for food and lodging. A camp store run by FFA sells candy and pop. *(Neil Schneider, Vice President)* •••

Computer Makeup

The McLean County Chapter in western Kentucky has been working on a new FFA newsletter to inform the chapter and local businesses of the chapter's activities.

The newsletter was typed with the chapter's computer and with the Apple program Newsroom. The letter was then run off and mailed to all local businesses and passed out at school to all members. The newsletter was also sent to members of the faculty.

In the first edition, there were 13 articles, ranging from the county fair to the national convention. It was complete with headlines and illustrations from the software program.

There was even an article about our computer and the AgriData Network that supplies information about the FFA and lots of agricultural topics.

We are very happy with our newsletter and hope to eventually send one out every three or four months. *(Sammy Thomasson, Reporter)* •••

Computerized for BOAC

The Nazareth, Texas, FFA Chapter recently sponsored an innovative BOAC project. Using the chapter's four microcomputers, Advisor David Bownds and several fourth-year vo-ag students began a Computer Short Course for interested members of the community.

During each of the nine-hour courses, the guests were shown the uses and possibilities of the Visi-Calc spreadsheet program. Each guest then designed his or her own spreadsheet, which ranged from store inventories to cattle cost projections.

Thirty-two people took part in the four courses, each of which was held over three nights. Several more are being planned, since demand for the courses was much greater than anyone had anticipated. •••

Top Signature

Arizona Governor Evan Mecham signed a National FFA Week proclamation for Leigh Loughead, state secretary; Colin Mellon, state president; Kevin Eblen, national president; and Eric Wick, state treasurer. •••

Out of the Past

The major community activity in 1985 for LeRoy, Illinois, FFA was their yearlong support for LeRoy Sesquicentennial. The small community is located in McLean County, Illinois, between Bloomington and Champaign.

Preparations for the sesquicentennial involved three years' planning, a yearlong series of activities and the major celebration during each of June, 1985's weekends. The LeRoy FFA Chapter was involved in the planning of the sesquicentennial and in special activities such as financing, parades, a plot demonstration, agricultural displays and exhibits and a dairy promotion.

The horse-drawn corn planter was a major attraction for the corn demonstration plot the chapter had for the sesquicentennial.

Radio, TV and print media were all used in publicizing the chapter's sesquicentennial demonstration involving a horse planted and cultivated corn plot. *(Story and photos from the National Chapter application)* •••

The Class Will Come To Order

The Battle Lake, Minnesota, FFA Parliamentary Procedure Team conducted a one-night Robert's Rules of Orders class for the community.

To begin the evening, Advisor Larson introduced the team and explained their activities.

Then Chapter President David Franze called the mock meeting to order.

Following minutes, roll call, officer report and committee reports, the team conducted old and new business. Sample topics were FFA Week, state convention and Alumni relations.

Throughout these topics the team properly presented main motions, question of privilege, refer to a committee, limiting debate, previous question, plus many more.

The sample meeting was then adjourned to give community leaders an opportunity to ask questions.

The evening was helpful for the community and the team had fun doing it. *(Lorraine Bryce)* •••

FFA Superstars Show Off

The annual Muskogee County, Oklahoma, FFA Superstars Contest at the fairgrounds arena, February 17, included Haskell, Boynton, Oktaha, Warner, Webbers Falls, Ft. Gibson and Muskogee Chapters.

Each chapter sends teams for events such as wild cow milking, greased pig chase, barrel pickup, cow chip throwing, hay loading, chicken dressing (dress chickens in pants, bonnet and a bow tie), hog calling and an obstacle course.

The obstacle course team has 11 members who begin the course with wood sawing. Then one member must carry an egg in a spoon in his mouth to the next point, which is a wheelbarrow race. Next is the barrel walk, followed by steel post driving and finally, it is rounded up with a good old-fashioned sack race.

The Muskogee County Cattlemen's Association members serve as judges for the event. The event is a comical sight for spectators and everyone is welcome. Admission is free. *(Wendell Fenton, Advisor)* •••

Big Wheels

FFA in Union, Missouri, offered to coordinate the mini tractor pull at the local fair. It gives area youngsters a chance to compete like the big pullers. Parents, friends and relatives line both sides of the street to watch this mid-afternoon event. There is always plenty of action and no one goes away without some prize. *(From the National Chapter application)* •••

Show and Sell

Buffalo Center Bison FFA in Iowa created a stronger community spirit by organizing a Farm and Home Show.

A six-member committee was appointed to look into the possiblity of a Farm and Home Show for the Buffalo Center-Rake communities. Members attended the February meeting of the businessmen's club and presented the idea and asked if there would be support.

The variety of exhibitors attracted many townsfolk and helped stimulate community spirit.

FFA members set up a format and detailed the program and returned to the March meeting.

Businesses were signed up and a $30 booth rental was collected. FFA members did all the planning, layout work, advertising and promoting for the second Farm and Home Show.

The show was held in the 70-foot by 140-foot shop area of Jensvold's Implement. There were 65 businesses with booths. The local newspapers and radio stations ran $610.55 in promotional ads paid for by the chapter. *(From the National Chapter application)* •••

Moon Talk

Can you imagine watching "Silver Bullet" in a pasture, under a full moon?

Members of the Chouteau, Oklahoma, FFA Chapter, a Chouteau 4-H club and the local Young Farmer members held a weiner roast, fishing derby and spook movie screening at the farm of Frank and Norma Grossman.

Power for the VCR and TV was supplied by a generator because we were over a mile from the nearest electrical outlet.

While waiting for the fish winners to be selected and the sun to set, members played football and pitched horseshoes. Prizes given for the fishing derby ranged from a filet knife for the largest fish to a can of sardines to the member trying the hardest with no success.

Everyone brought covered dishes and the FFA chapter furnished the rest. Hay bales were around for seats. Pumpkins added the color. *(Carmen Detweiler, Reporter)* •••

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The Joke Page

A zoo manager hurried over to a college campus near the zoo. He went up to a student and said, *"I've got 200 school children coming to the zoo today and I don't have a gorilla. I'll pay you $10 an hour if you will dress up as a gorilla and sit in a cage."*

The student agreed to do this. He put on a gorilla suit and climbed into the cage. When a crowd of children came by his cage, the student started showing off by swinging on some bars.

He swung too hard, lost his grip and flew into the lion's den next to his cage. Terrified, he began to scream.

The lion quickly put his paw over the gorilla's mouth and whispered, *"Be quiet. Do you want all of us to get fired?"*

Mike Caddell
Milford, Texas

Farmer 1: *"The IRS sent my tractor an award."*

Farmer 2: *"What was it for?"*

Farmer 1: *"It was a certificate of de-preciation."*

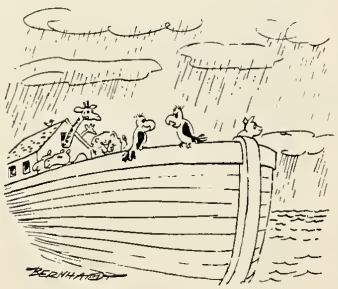
Heath Gerdes
Wenona, Illinois

Classified ad: *"Auto repair service, free pickup and delivery. Try us once and you'll never go anywhere again."*

Kevin Denton
Milan, Tennessee

Q: Why did the turtle cross the road?
A: To get to the Shell station.

Amy Wales
Raceland, Louisiana



"Stop saying, 'We're all in the same boat.'"

"Daddy," said the little boy, *"I want to get married." "Oh,"* said his father, *"who do you have in mind?"*

"Grandma," said the little boy. *"Wait a minute,"* said his father, *"You don't think I'd let you marry my mother, do you?"*

"Why not?" said the little boy, *"You married mine."*

Jodi Botts
Oneida, Tennessee

Lisa: *"I noticed the other day that my little brother had written T.G.I.F. on his sneakers."*

Susan: *"What did that mean?"*

Lisa: *"He said it meant 'Toes go in first.'"*

Lisa Shifflett
Standardsville, Virginia

Clerk: *"Did you kill any moths with the mothballs you bought yesterday?"*

Young customer: *"Well, I tried for two hours, but I couldn't hit a one of 'em."*

Alan Moore
Marengo, Iowa

A teenager was calling up a record store on the phone to see if they sold his favorite record. He accidently dialed the number of the local feed mill. When the feed salesman answered the phone, the teenager said, *"Do you have 'Two Hot Lips and Seven Kisses?'"*

The feed salesman thought for a moment and replied, *"No, we don't. But we have two tom cats and seven kittens."*

Joel Knoeck
Marathon, Wisconsin

Four-year-old Jason was so anti-spinach that when he saw asparagus for the first time, he moaned, *"Oh, no! Not spinach legs!"*

Bradley Carlson
Billings, Montana

A literature teacher asked, *"Give me a pen name such as Mark Twain."*

One boy jumped up, all excited and said, *"Eraser Mate."*

Lynn Allison
Bridgeport, Alabama

Q: What do you call a professional truck driver?
A: A semi-pro.

Jason Baenen
Green Bay, Wisconsin

The intructor in a mechanics class told one of his students, *"I'm putting this rivet in the correct position. When I nod my head, hit it real hard with your hammer."*

The student did—and the instructor woke up the next day in the hospital with one heck of a headache.

Bobbie Mae Cooley
Bowen, Illinois

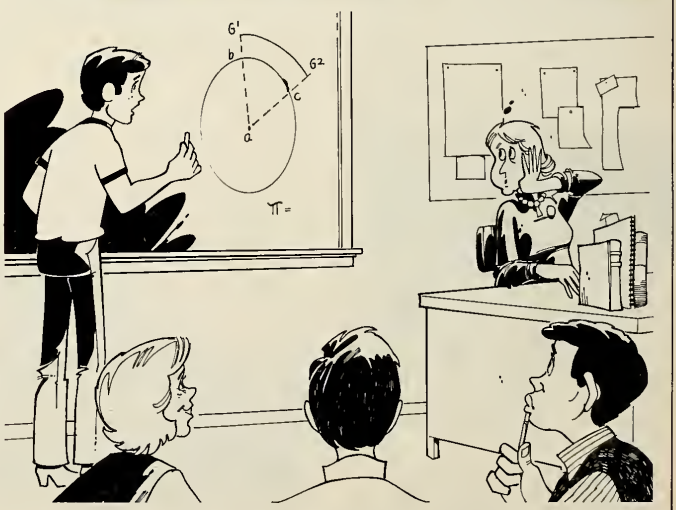
Q: Why did the cows go to church?
A: Because they heard there was going to be new pastor.

Calvin Jones
Holly Springs, Mississippi

A minister interviewing a woman who was applying for a church staff position, read her application and said, *"I see your birthday is April 14. What year?"* Her simple answer was *"Every year."*

Marguerite Reasner
Indianapolis, Indiana

Charlie, the Greenhand



"Is this what they mean by a vicious circle?"

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